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Music among the Poets and Poetical Writers—(continued.)

"Now came still evening on, and twilight grey
Had in her sober livery all things clad;
Silence accompanied; for beast and bird,
They to their grassy couch, these to their nests,
Were slunk, all but the wakeful nightingale,
She all night long her amorous descant sang;
Silence was pleased."—*Milton*.

"Now is the pleasant time,
The cool, the silent, save where silence yields
To the night-warbling bird, that now awake,
Tunes sweetest his love-laboured song."—*Milton*.

"O Nightingale! thou surely art
A creature of a fiery heart:—
These notes of thine—they pierce and pierce;
Tumultuous harmony and fierce!
Thou sing'st as if the god of wine
Had helped thee to a valentine;
A song in mockery and despite
Of shades, and dews, and silent night;
And steady bliss, and all the loves
Now sleeping in these peaceful groves."

Wordsworth.

"Through the soft silence of the list'ning night,
The sober-suited songstress trills her lay."

Thomson.

"She sings
Her sorrows through the night, and on the bough
Sole sitting, still at ev'ry dying fall
Takes up again her lamentable strain
Of winding woe, till, wide around, the woods
Sigh to her song, and with her wail resound."

Thomson.

"When join'd at eve,
Soft-murmuring streams and gales of gentlest breath
Melodious Philomela's wakeful strain
Attempter, could not man's discerning ear
Through all its tones the sympathy pursue;
Nor yet this breath divine of nameless joy
Steal through his veins, and fan the awaken'd heart,
Mild as the breeze, yet rapturous as the song."

Akenside.

"thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
Singest of summer in full-throated ease."—*Keats*.

"The birds lie dumb, when the night stars come,
And silence broods o'er the covers;
But a voice now wakes
In the thorny brakes,
And singeth a song for lovers,—Love!
A sad sweet song for lovers!
It singeth a song, of grief and wrong,
A passionate song for others;
Yet its own sweet pain
Can never be vain,
If it 'wakeneth love in others,—Love!
It 'wakeneth love in others.'—*Barry Cornwall*.

"Hark! the nightingale,
Queen of all music, to her listening heart
Speaks, and the woods are still."

Barry Cornwall.

"A nightingale, in transport, seemed to fling
His warble out, and then sit listening:
And ever and anon, amidst the flush
Of the thick leaves, there ran a breezy gush;
And then, from dewy myrtles lately bloom'd,
An odour small, in at the window, fumed."

Leigh Hunt.

"then was heard,
Sole voice, the poet's and the lover's bird,
Preluding first, as though the sounds were cast
For the dear leaves about her, till at last
With floods of rapture, in a perfect shower,
She vents her heart on the delicious hour."

Leigh Hunt.

"the bird of wakeful glow,
Whose louder song is like the voice of life,
Triumphant o'er death's image; but whose deep,
Low, lovelier note is like a gentle wife,
A poor, a pensive, yet a happy one,
Stealing, when daylight's common tasks are done,
An hour for mother's work; and singing low,
While her tired husband and her children sleep."

Leigh Hunt.

OBJECTS OF MUSICAL EDUCATION AND THEIR TIME.

BY DR. MARX.*

What is to be learned, and which is the proper time for each kind of instruction? These questions, of the utmost importance in their minutest particulars, demand the gravest and most searching consideration from parents and teachers when they have determined to dedicate a child to musical education. To professors of music, these questions must always be of the highest interest. In order to point out, at least, the most important periods, we will take a cursory view of all the relationships and circumstances of musical employment, whether as a profession or otherwise.

We must, in the first place, clear away a deep and widely diffused prejudice. On the question being asked, What ought to be learned in music? it is usual, particularly among teachers, to make a distinction between those persons who make music a profession, and those who cultivate it merely for pleasure and general humanizing education; between future professional men and mere amateurs. The former, according to the judgment of the teachers, ought to be *fundamentally*—the latter, however, only *superficially*, or less fundamentally instructed. This distinction is one of the most erroneous and destructive that ever crept into discipline. That education alone is beneficially fruitful which is most perfectly grounded; and, what is more, it is the easiest, and consumes the least time. In order to be convinced of the truth of these assertions, it is only necessary to have a right understanding of the nature of this fundamental knowledge; not of the false pedantry which assumes its name (and is as useless to the professional man as to the amateur), but of the study absolutely necessary for the comprehension of the real nature of the science, of the close connection of all that is essential, and of the constant and rational development of one form or figure from another, so that the preceding form necessarily leads on the succeeding, and the succeeding form is always prepared and facilitated by the preceding.

Between the instruction of the artist and of the amateur there is only this difference—that the latter may discon-

* *Dr. Marx's General Musical Instruction*. Published in Novello's Library for the Diffusion of Musical Knowledge. Cloth, price 6s. 6d.

tinue his pursuit of the science earlier than the former, at any point or position of artistic power he may choose to fix; whereas the artist is necessarily obliged to dedicate himself entirely, once and for ever, to the art of his election.

Now to return to our own proper question—What is to be learned, and which is the right time for each study?

SONG.

We have already said that if possible every one should learn music: we now pronounce our opinion more specially, that *every one, if possible, should learn singing*. Song is man's own true peculiar music. The voice is our own peculiar connate instrument—it is much more—it is *the living sympathetic organ of our souls*. Whatever moves within us, whatever sensation or emotion we feel, becomes immediately embodied and perceptible in our voice; and so, indeed, the voice and song, as we may observe in the earliest infancy, are our first poetry and the most faithful companions of our feelings, until the “shrill pipe of tremulous age.” If, as in song, properly so called, music and speech be lovingly united, and the words be those of a true poet, then is consummated the most intimate union of mind and soul, of understanding and feeling—that combined unity, in which the whole power of the human being is exhibited, and exerts upon the singer and the hearer that wonderful might of song, which by infant nations was considered, not quite untruly, as supernatural; and whose softened, and therefore, perhaps, more beneficent influence, now contributes to social elevation and moral improvement.

Song is the most appropriate treasure of the solitary, and it is at the same time the most stringent and forcible bond of companionship, even from the jovial or the sentimental popular catch of the booth, to the sublime creations of genius resounding from congregated artistic thousands assembled by one common impulse in the solemn cathedral. Devotion in our churches becomes more edifying; our popular festivals and days of enjoyment become more mannerly and animated; our social meetings more lively and intellectually joyful; our whole life, in short, becomes more elevated and cheerful by the spread of the love of song and of the power of singing among the greatest possible number of individuals. And these individuals will feel themselves more intimately connected with society, more largely participating in its benefits, of more worth in it and gaining more by it, when they unite their voices in the social harmony of their friends.

To the musician, but more especially to the composer, song is an almost irreplaceable and indispensable means of calling forth and seizing the most delicate, tender, and deepest strains of feeling from our inmost sensations. No instrument can be a substitute for song, the immediate creation of our own soul in our own breast; we can have no deeper impression of the relations of sound, of the power of melody: we cannot work more effectively upon our own souls and upon those of our hearers than by heartfelt song.

Every friend of music, therefore, should sing: and every musician, who has a tolerable voice, should be a master of song in every branch. Song should, also, in the order of time, be our first musical exercise. This should begin in the earliest childhood, in the third to the fifth year, if it be not possible earlier, but not in the form of instruction. The song of the mother which allures imitation, the joyful circle of children playing together, is the first natural singing school, where, without notes or masters, simply according to hearing and fancy, the fibres of the soul are first freely excited and set in vibration. Instruction in music, properly so called, should not in general begin until the second step of life's ladder, between the seventh and fourteenth years.

By far the greatest number of individuals have sufficient qualifications of voice for singing, and to justify their pursuit of the art with reasonable hope of success. Indeed,

very considerable and valuable vocal faculties are much more common than is generally imagined. There is certainly less deficiency of natural gifts than of persons observant and talented enough to discover, to foster, and to cultivate them. In the meantime, if indeed every one have not disposition and means (and good fortune) to become of some consequence as a singer, let us consider that even with an inconsiderable voice, much of the most touching and joy-inspiring capabilities may be attained, if feeling, artistic cultivation, and a vivid conception speak through a medium but slenderly endowed. Why should any one be dissatisfied if small means and trouble have made him capable of touching our hearts with a joyful or tender song; or have enabled him to participate skilfully in the choral assemblies of his fellow citizens. Whether it may be advisable to proceed farther in singing and the cultivation of the voice, must be decided by the circumstances and inclinations of each individual. From composers, conductors, and higher masters, a complete knowledge of everything belonging to singing is to be absolutely demanded, and also practical execution thereof; unless, indeed, organic defect should render it to them impossible. A composer who does not expressly study singing, and practise it as far as possible, will scarcely be able to write for the voice; he will with difficulty acquire the more delicate musical declamation; he will never become entire master of the life-like conducting of the voice, which is something far different from mere correctness.

(To be continued.)

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

T. F. N., Briton-ferry.—*It is advisable to adhere as strictly as possible to the time indicated by the metronome throughout any piece of music. Dr. Marx's "General Musical Instruction" will, perhaps, best answer your purpose.*

S. B. K., Watford.—*The composition is respectfully declined for publication in the Musical Times.*

This Journal is published fortnightly on the 1st and 15th of every month.

We would request those who send us country newspapers, wishing us to read particular paragraphs, to mark the passage, by cutting a slit in the paper near it.

Colored Envelopes are sent to all Subscribers whose payment in advance is exhausted. The paper will be discontinued where the Subscriber neglects to renew. We again remind those who are disappointed in getting back numbers, that only the music pages are stereotyped, and of the rest of the paper, only sufficient are printed to supply the current sale.

The late hour at which Advertisements reach us, interferes much with their proper classification.

We cannot undertake to return offered contributions; the authors, therefore, will do well to retain copies.

Brief Chronicle of the last Fortnight.

THE OXFORD COMMEMORATION WEEK began on the 18th of June, and included all the usual ceremonies. A local paper says:—“At twelve o'clock the place of attraction was the Music School, where hundreds flocked to hear the exercise, composed by Mr. Richard Hacking, jun., of Worcester College. The smallness of the building prevented great numbers from being present, which must have proved a great disappointment, as we understand the composition was of a high order. The professor (the Rev. Sir F. G. Ouseley, M.A.) was present. The exercise was exceedingly well performed by a large orchestra, consisting of some of the best vocal and instrumental performers in Oxford, assisted by several vocalists from Manchester.”